2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



was permitted to sleep near the sacred bundle until he recovered, believing that the bundle would induce visions. In the case of supervised fasting directed by the mother's brother, he defined the rules and terminated the fasting. He also prepared the first food taken by those completing their fast and watched that none ate or drank excessively for a few days.

A young man distinguishing himself as a scout and desiring to advance to warrior status, when learning another war leader was organizing an expedition, would go to his lodge, hoping that he would be invited to join the party. As a warrior there was greater likelihood of capturing horses or striking an enemy. The leader was responsible for the welfare of all those serving under him and selected the members of his party. When the party was large, the leader selected those with the best war records to serve as co-leaders.

Mandan warfare was highly formalized, and there was a strict division of labor. At the top, the leader or Old Wolf directed the party, selecting the scouts and their leader, the Young Wolves or warriors, and the Camp Tenders, and he was responsible to the village but more particularly to the families represented in the party for their welfare. He determined the territory where the enemy would be sought, places to camp, the time to make or break camp, and whether an attack would be made when the enemy was found. A great leader was a successful teacher who instructed his party in methods of "striking the enemy" without loss to his own party. A leader who lost a man was said to have "kicked the stone," which reduced his status until he had "refasted" and led a successful war party.

Returning from an unsuccessful war expedition, the leader would cry as he approached the village, while the other members would walk quietly to their lodges. For many leaders, this would be the last expedition as leader. He would be condemned by the brothers, sisters, and parents of the one killed and would be opposed by them every time he sought advancement in status. He could and frequently did overcome their opposition by going into mourning for the one he was held responsible for. He would gash his legs and cut off a finger which was offered to the Sun. He would set up a tent or build a simple shelter at a distance from the village where he would remain. In the meanwhile, his

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



brothers and sisters, assisted by their clan and his age-grade society, would accumulate robes and other property which were given to the lodge group that had lost a member. They were expected to accept the goods which was at first refused "because they loved their relative so much." The unsuccessful war leader's representatives then sought the "village chief," a man who by virtue of his tact in settling quarrels and his generosity in caring for the old was highest in village esteem, and paid him to take his pipe to the grieved relatives, lay it before them, and inform them that they, as relatives and associates of the unsuccessful war leader, begged them to accept it. Since none could refuse a request when a sacred pipe was placed before them, the aggrieved people, both men and women, smoked and accepted the goods to which in the meanwhile had been added horses and other articles of value.

The aggrieved family, feeling compassion for the unsuccessful war leader who had shown, by his act of fasting and his family's lavish display of goods, respect for their lost relative, sent a representative with new clothing to the fasting place, dressed and painted him, and conducted him to their lodge, where he was given the choicest foods to eat. While he was eating, the brothers of the boy who had been killed, brought their best horse and riding equipment to the lodge. When the feast was ended, the unsuccessful warrior, now in good graces with the family, was told to mount. He was led through the village, while the oldest female of the lodge sang the "Praise Songs." If an enemy had been killed at the time one of the party was lost, the "Victory Songs" were then sung and the Scalp Dance rites were performed. The unsuccessful warrior, by his acts of mourning and the payment of goods to the aggrieved family, regained his former status. If he were successful the next time he led a war party, the people said that bad luck will sometimes come even to those most careful to conform to tribal custom, and "never hold it against him." However, a second unsuccessful war expedition was his last as leader. He would not fast again, and having paid for his bad luck once, his relatives and clan advised him to forsake leadership of war parties as he had "kicked the stone." People would say he had not fasted right and would have been afraid to follow him. By giving many

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



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feasts, he would be respected as an average person, but he would never be able to rise to eminence.

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A young man's first participation in a successful war expedition in which he captured horses and "struck" an enemy was an important occasion in his life and involved practically everyone in the village as well the other villages of the tribe. In the division of his horses, he expressed his respect for those who assisted him during the expedition as well as his affection for his friends and relatives in the village. If he captured a number of horses, among which was an animal of peculiar markings which the leader dreamed of and described before it was found, that animal belonged to the leader. The leader would also receive the first horse captured. Strays went to the first one seeing them regardless of the person capturing them. He would give the camp tender one if he had not already received one. Returning to the village, he would give one horse to his oldest married sister, who would, in turn, give it to her husband to use. This was a means of expressing rivalry between brothers-in-law of the same age. If his sisters were not married, the horse would go to his mother. His sisters would not ordinarily get horses on subsequent occasions unless they came out to meet him. He would give one horse to his father and, if there were any additional animals, would keep them for himself. However, if he had also been successful in striking the enemy while capturing these horses, he would not succeed in keeping any of the horses, for, on the succeeding day while the Scalp Dance was celebrated, an old woman of his father's clan would announce that he was to receive a new name to supplant the one he had received as a baby. He was presented with new moccasins, leggings, and shirt, and he paid her as representative of his father's moiety in horses and other property.

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A young man's reputation was based on his relatives' generosity which was contingent on the wealth and status of his relatives. Learning that he had struck the enemy and knowing one always received a new name that had belonged to a man of the father's moiety, the brothers and sisters accumulated goods for the occasion. They were assisted by members of their clan and young men of his age-grade society. During the Scalp Dance, singing was interrupted while the mother and her

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



554 703 of the cattail plant in his hair. Those stabbed by a knife or spear could wear a stick carved to resemble a knife. One who had been shot in battle painted red spots on his shirts, leggings, or robes with red stripes below to indicate bullet holes and blood dripping from the wounds. Men painted horse tracks on their blankets to indicate the horses they had stolen. These tracks were bunched to indicate the number taken on each expedition.

727 597 581 Small children too young to remember their parents were frequently taken prisoners and adopted into the village. They were "struck" by the warriors who were given credit toward their war record but such records were not related during ceremonies once the children were adopted into the households. Girls approaching marriageable age were frequently returned alive to the village and sold to those needing an extra wife.

554 562 703 Women also qualified for war honors and were eligible to wear the same decorations as men. Informants remembered a number of women who had struck an enemy and had displayed their war honors during the Scalp Dance. One woman concealed herself at the entrance to her lodge and hit an Assiniboine on the head with a stone hammer. She scalped him and, during the dances, received a hearty applause whenever she was leader of the line of dancers, carrying her scalp on a stick.

554 703 The war records enumerated above constitute the principal awards having social recognition and fall into two general groups: awards limited solely to war leaders and consisting of scalps which were worn on their clothing or carried on scalp sticks and awards to warriors consisting of peculiar painting of the clothing, wearing of coyote tails, and certain feathers. Only those who had led many war parties and had been successful attained the highest ranks as chiefs unless their lack of significant successes in warfare was compensated with a record of many feasts during which time much property was given away or the possession of important tribal bundles. There was a series of designs painted or woven on robes which proclaimed the amount of goods so disposed of.

## MARRIAGE AND THE HOUSEHOLD

581 584 Marriage was an exceedingly important event among the leading families of a Mandan village, but for the average family

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



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People receiving goods were:

| Women | Men |
|---|---|
| Big Chief Woman | Wolf Ghost |
| Spring Woman | Crows Breast |
| Lone Woman | Big Foot Bull |
| Hides and Eats | Afraid To Be Chief |
| Stays Yellow | Red Buffalo Cow |
| Unborn Calf Woman | Bull against Wind |
| Penned Up | Red Shield |
| Goes Out | Small Ankles |
| Owl Woman | Awaxniax (?) |
| Beaver Woman | Belly Up |
| Different Corn Silk | Broken Ax |
| Feather on Head Woman | |
| Otter Woman | |
| Eagle Woman | |
| Cedar Woman | |

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After the gifts were all presented, the people went home. Clam Necklace and his two wives went outside the village near the scaffolds for the dead and put up three new images, one of the Sun, one of the Moon, and another of the Old Woman Above.

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The image of the Sun consisted of a round red disk painted on white calico or hide. Chokecherry brush was lashed to the top of the pole. The Old Woman Above image was made of a robe, hair side out, wrapped around an ash pole, with a piece of black hide for the face and white sage for the hair. It was tied to the pole with a belt which held the image in place. Moon's image was a red crescent painted on a white calico or hide lashed to an ash post [see above, Fig. 41]. The images were set up before sunrise.

Bundles having Old Woman Above's daughter represented added a fourth image. Instead of placing the images in a row with mounds in front of Sun's and Moon's images, the four images were placed at four corners of a square with the mounds in the center. White sage was set into the ground at the apex of the mound representing the Sun and black sage on the other mound representing the Moon. When two buffalo skulls were placed at the shrine, one was a bull's and the other a cow's skull. When four skulls were used, they were bull's skulls and represented buffaloes of the four seasons. These shrines became fasting places to which were brought skulls of relatives taken from the scaffolds. Enemies whose skulls lay on the prairies were brought to these shrines by those fasting there. Children's skulls were not placed in these circles.

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The presence of enemy skulls in these circles was not unusual. Men fasting on the hills often collected the skulls of their enemies or went to the spot where the body lay to seek visions.

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Maximilian referred to these shrines when he wrote:

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
NQ17 Mandan NQ17



had been shot six times; some wore a wooden knife, a sign they had killed an enemy with a knife. Maximilian describes one man, a chief, whose face was painted half yellow and half red, with stripes made by rubbing the color off; his arms had seventeen lines showing the number of his deeds, and on his breast, in yellow, was a hand showing that he had made prisoners.

When a youth first wished to lead a war party he at once acquired a medicine. Then he solicited his young men friends by presents and assurances of the efficacy of his medicine and after feasts and dances he departed with as many followers as he could get. In the large war parties there were four real leaders and sometimes three others called bad leaders. Each real leader carried a medicine pipe in a case on his back. To become a chief it was necessary to begin as a war party leader, then to kill a man while in a party where the candidate was not a leader. Again, while following another leader, he must be the first to discover the enemy and kill one of them, and lastly he must have owned at some time a white buffalo hide. Each warrior carried about his neck the whistle of his band, and at the moment of falling upon the enemy these were blown and the war-cry was sounded.

The Mandans seldom took male prisoners but even when taken they were never tortured. As soon as a prisoner had entered the village and eaten corn he was considered as one of the nation; the women, however, could go out and meet the returning party and kill the prisoners then. Scalps were dried and used in decoration. When a successful war party returned they were met by the women and children who entered the village with them dancing the scalp dance. The warriors painted the face, and often the whole body, black, and the scalp dance was danced in the medicine lodge four nights, then later in the middle of the village. If no Mandan was killed in the campaign, the dance was kept up for six months.

In all these war customs we find nothing more than the general plains ideas such as were found in all the Sioux tribes and among most of their neighbors.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



enemy he paints a line running obliquely round the arm, and another crossing it in the opposite direction, with three transverse stripes. On killing the second enemy he paints his left leg (that is, the leggin) of a reddish-brown. If he kills the second enemy before another is killed by his comrades, he may wear two entire wolves' tails at his heels. On his third exploit he paints two longitudinal stripes on his arms, and three transverse stripes. This is the exploit that is esteemed the highest; after the third exploit no more marks are made. If he kills an enemy after others of the party have done the same, he may wear on his heel one wolf's tail, the tip of which is cut off. In every numerous war party there are four leaders (partisans, karokkanakah), sometimes seven, but only four are reckoned as the real partisans; the others are called bad partisans (karokkanakah-chakohosch, literally, *partisans galeux*). All partisans carry on their backs a medicine pipe in a case, which other warriors dare not have. To become a chief (Numakschi) a man must have been a partisan, and then kill an enemy when he is not a partisan. If he follows another partisan for the second time, he must have first discovered the enemy, have killed one, and then possessed the hide of a white buffalo cow complete, with the horns, to pretend to the title of chief (Numakschi). Dipauch, who related these particulars, had himself done all these, and was an eminent man among his people, but had never assumed that title. He had given five horses for his white buffalo hide. All the warriors wear small war pipes round their necks, which are often very elegantly ornamented with porcupine quills (Plate XXI. Fig. 9, and Plate XLVIII. Fig. 14).

As soon as they advance to attack the enemy every one sounds his pipe, and all together utter the war whoop, a shrill cry, which they render tremulous by repeatedly and suddenly striking the mouth with the hand. Those who fast and dream, in order to perform an exploit, are entitled to wear a wolf's skin. A warrior has a right to wear as many eagle's feathers as he has performed exploits. All Indians, on their military expeditions, erect, in the evening, a sort of fort, in which they are, in some measure, secure against a sudden attack. In Major Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains, it is stated, that they often make *caches* (hiding-places) in these forts; but we did not observe any such on the Missouri. The Indians, on their expeditions, always set a watch by night as soon as they are near the enemy, and often send out scouts to considerable distances. At such a post the Indians are very vigilant and active; after an engagement they do not bury the dead, but, if they have not time to carry them away, leave them on the spot where they fell. The scalps, called, by the Canadians, *les chevelures*, are often preserved for a long time stretched upon small hoops, and the hair is afterwards used as an ornament to the dress of the men. The skin of the scalp is generally painted red. The Mandans, Manitaries, and Crows, never torture their prisoners like the Pawnees and the eastern nations. When a prisoner has arrived at the village, and eaten maize, he is considered as one of their own nation, and no person ever thinks of molesting him. Often, however, the women hasten out to meet

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



721 727 the prisoners ere they can reach the village, and kill them; this is especially an act of revenge for their husbands or sons who may have fallen in the battle.

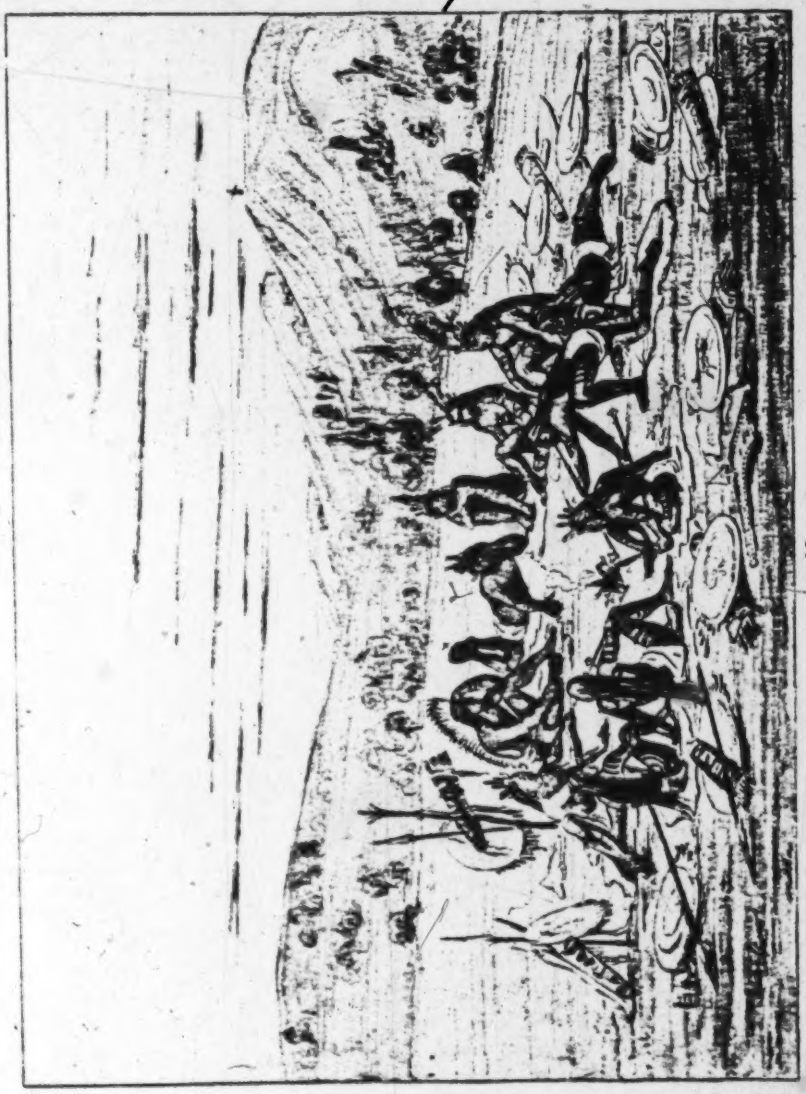
721 555 When a young man desires to become a leader, or partisan, he first gains, by gifts, the favour of the other young men, and then dedicates a medicine pipe, which is a plain, unornamented tube. This ceremony is accomplished by a four days' fast, and supplications for assistance to the lord of life, the first man, &c. &c., and other supernatural beings. He then addresses the young men, and calls upon them to give him their support in his undertakings. If a sufficient number testify their readiness to accompany him in a warlike expedition, and such an expedition is determined upon, they dance and feast in the medicine lodge for several successive nights, from whence, too, they generally march off by night. The women never accompany these expeditions. On setting out the men are badly clothed, and not painted. They do not depart in a body, but, for the most part, singly, or in small detatched parties. At a certain distance from the village they halt upon an isolated hill, open their medicine bags, and, after the men have sat down in a [787] circle, the partisan produces his medicine pipe, which all present smoke; the person who smokes last, then spreads his medicines on the ground, or hangs them up, and from them foretels the fate of the expedition. The Indians manifest much gravity and decorum on solemn occasions like these.

727 535 When the warriors return from their expedition, the scalps are carried on in advance, on high poles: if they have performed any exploits, they paint their faces black; very frequently the whole body is thus disfigured. The women and children go out to meet them, and they enter the village performing the scalp dance. This dance is then repeated four successive nights in the medicine lodge, and is subsequently danced in the open space, in the centre of the village. If the campaign took place in the spring, it is danced, at intervals, till the fall of the leaf in autumn; if in the autumn, it is danced till spring, but should any of the nation be killed in the interim all festivities immediately cease. In the scalp dance the Indians paint themselves in various ways, form a semicircle, advance, and retreat amid the din of singing, the beating of the drum and schischikué. The wives of those men who have obtained the scalps carry them on long rods.

555 All the distinguished deeds performed by a war party are placed to the account of the partisan. All the scalps that are taken belong to him, and also the horses that they have captured. He who has killed an enemy is a brave man, and reckons one exploit; but the partisan rises the highest on that account, even though he had not seen any of the enemies who have been slain. When he returns home, the old men and women meet, and sing the scalp song, on which he must make them all presents of value. He gives away all the captured horses, and valuable articles, and is afterwards a poor man, but his reputation is great. Successful partisans afterwards become chiefs, and are highly respected by their nation. The Indian youths go to war when they are only fourteen or fifteen years of age. Sometimes they make excursions on horseback in the winter.

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857

NQ17 Mandan NQ17



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[p. 142(B)]

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17



231
526 The Indians are hard and cruel masters; and, added to their cruelties is the sin that is familiar in the Christian world, of sporting with the limbs and the lives of these noble animals. *Horse-racing* here, as in all more enlightened communities, is one of the most exciting amusements, and one of the most extravagant modes of gambling.

I have been this day a spectator to scenes of this kind, which have been enacted in abundance, on a course which they have, just back of their village; and although I never had the least taste for this cruel amusement in my own country, yet, I must say, I have been not a little amused and pleased with the thrilling effect which these exciting scenes have produced amongst so wild and picturesque a group.

I have made a sketch of the ground and the group, as near as I could (PLATE 61); shewing the manner of "starting" and "coming out," which vary a little from the customs of the *knowing* world; but in other respects, I believe, a horse-race is the same all the world over.

727 Besides these, many have been the amusements of this day, to which I have been an eye-witness; and since writing the above, I have learned the cause of this unusual expression of hilarity and mirth; which was no more nor less than the safe return of a small war-party, who had been so long out without any tidings having been received of them—that they had long since been looked upon as sacrificed to the fates of war and lost. This party was made up of the most distinguished and desperate young men of the tribe, who had sallied out against the Riccarees, and taken the most solemn oath amongst themselves never to return without achieving a victory. They had wandered long and faithfully about the country, following the trails of their enemy; when they were attacked by a numerous party, and lost several of their men and all their horses. In this condition, to evade the scrutiny of their enemy, who were closely investing the natural route to their village; they took a circuitous range of the country, to enable them to return with their lives, to their village.

In this plight, it seems, I had dropped my little canoe alongside of them, while descending from the Mouth of Yellow Stone to this place, not many weeks since; where they had bivouacked or halted, to smoke and consult on the best and safest mode of procedure. At the time of meeting them, not knowing anything of their language, they were unable to communicate their condition to me, and more probably were afraid to do so even if they could have done it, from apprehension that we might have given some account of them to their enemies. I rested my canoe an hour or so with them during which time they treated us with an indifferent reserve, yet respectfully; and we passed on our way, without further information of them or their plans than the sketch that I there made (PLATE 63), and which I shall preserve and value as one of the most pleasing groups I ever have had the pleasure to see. Seated on their buffalo robes, which were spread upon the grass, with their respective weapons laying about them, and lighting their pipes at a

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17



727 little fire which was kindled in the centre—the chief or leader of the party, with his arms stacked behind him, and his long head-dress of war-eagles' quills and ermine falling down over his back, whilst he sat in a contemplative and almost desponding mood, was surely one of the most striking and beautiful illustrations of a natural hero that I ever looked upon.

These gallant fellows got safely home to their village, and the numerous expressions of joy for their return, which I have this day witnessed, have so much fatigued me that I write brief, and close my Letter here.